Abstract: Being Queer

The subject matter is relatively new, if not controversial. Following from an exhibition, 'Queer space' in Storefront Gallery in New York, the first of its kind to delve into questions revolving around the subject of homosexuality within architecture, homosexuality in architecture is, in quite figurative terms, blown 'out of its closet'. Of course, one of the typical classic respond form a white, middle class, male heterosexual to this issue is, in quite expected terms, "but it simply doesn't matter! I couldn't care less whether an architect is female or male, gay or straight, black, brown, green or blue!". Indeed such respond is to bluntly miss the point: While enunciating from the position of just one queer, it nevertheless takes a homosexual or queer designer to make or 'queer' space for the queer subjects.

So what is queer space? Is there really a queer architecture.? Perhaps the more fundamental question to start is to ask why is queer space 'queer' and not 'homosexual'. If queer is the state of identity of being different from norm or 'eccentric', then what meaning or 'queerness' does this identity ascribe to queer space? The attempt of this paper has two main purpose. The first is to investigate the fundamental sociological question regarding the stability of gender identity which necessarily leads to the argument for the queer identity. This in turn establishes the parameters of the second more important concern regarding how space enabled this identity to be socially performed, explored, expressed and experienced and perhaps liberated.

1 Definition of the term 'queer' adapted from the Merriam Webster's Collegiate Dictionary, tenth edition, Merriam- Webster, Incorporated, Springfield, Massachusetts, U.S.A.